

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet(s) of drawings includes changes to Figures 1 and 2. No new matter has been added.

Attachment: Replacement sheets

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Status of the Claims

Claim 1 has been amended. Claim 9 has been added. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-9 are pending.

Objections to the Drawings

The drawings are objected to because improper crosshatching is used. Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of a telephone call on October 16, 2007, to clarify for Applicants that the Examiner objected to depicting dust cover 7 and lubricant member 59 with crosshatching reserved for a metallic material. Instead, dust cover 7 is “an elastically deformable rubber or a soft synthetic resin, etc.” (Specification, p.6, second paragraph, corresponding to par. [0014] of the published application) and lubricant member 59 is, for example, grease (Specification, p.12, third line from the bottom, corresponding to par. [0027] of the published application). Applicants also thank the Examiner for suggesting that dust cover 7 be depicted as rubber or a synthetic material, and that lubricant member 59 be depicted as a liquid. Applicants have amended Figures 1 and 2 as suggested by the Examiner and consistent with MPEP § 608.02.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection.

application). Further, end face 55 “serves as a seat surface when the ball joint 1 is attached to the to-be-attached portion” (Specification p. 8 par. 1, corresponding to par. [0019] of the published application).

In contrast, ball stud 5 of Gottschald is approximately cylindrical without a separate disk-formed brim portion. The beveled portion of ball stud 5 of Gottschald does not provide a separate side end face or outer circumferential surface as in the present invention. Furthermore, the beveled portion cannot serve as an end face because it is covered by the bellows 8 and the unlabelled structure below bellows 8, and therefore it cannot serve as a seating surface seat to anything attached to the threaded area below ball stud 5.

Therefore, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite a brim portion “having an end face and an outer circumferential surface.” Rejected claims 2-8 depend upon independent claim 1 and should be allowable based on amended claim 1.

Applicants further note that the present invention includes a plug 11 integrally fixed with socket 16 and sealed to it by caulking portion 18 (Fig. 1, and Specification p. 7, second full paragraph, corresponding to par. [0017] of the published application). In contrast, housing cover 6 of Gottschald is a cup-shaped object which is screwed into housing 1 in order to close housing 1 (figure, and col. 2, lines 10-13). Therefore, Applicants added new claim 9, dependent upon claim 1, to recite a housing having an opening portion on one end, and closed on an opposite end by a plug caulked to the housing.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

CONCLUSION

Each and every point raised in the Office Action dated August 24, 2007 has been addressed on the basis of the above amendments and remarks. In view of the foregoing it is believed that claims 1-8 are in condition for allowance and it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered and that all pending claims be allowed and the case passed to issue.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

Dated: November 20, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments

REPLACEMENT SHEET